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A

TREATISE

ON

MILITARY EQUITATION.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Richard Fleming
A Inner Temple

TREATISE

ON

MILITARY EQUITATION.

BY W. TYNDALE,

LIEUT. COL. AND MAJOR OF THE FIRST REGIMENT OF LIFE GUARDS.

Fingit equum tenerâ docilem cervice magiſter
Ire viam, quam monſtrat eques. HOR.

——— So is my horſe ———
It is a creature that I teach to fight,
To wind, to ſtop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion govern'd by my ſpirit.
SHAKESP. *Jul. Cæſar.*

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GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES,

THIS TREATISE

IS

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A TREATISE ON MILITARY EQUITATION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY AND MISCELLANEOUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING an excellent work has been written by the late Lord PEMBROKE on the art of Military Equitation, and although I by no means have the vanity to think any attempt of mine can equal that noble author's production, or that my knowledge of the art can be put in competition with his, I truſt the following eſſay

will not be altogether unacceptable, and flatter myſelf it will be found to contain ſome uſeful inſtructions for regimental riding-maſters. Theſe for the moſt part, have been taken from the ranks, and having confined their obſervation and ſtudy only to their profeſſion, require explanations very clear and detailed, and the plaineſt and moſt convincing reaſons when an attempt is made to alter, or introduce any thing new, as they are in general ſtrongly bigotted to the precepts they firſt imbibed, however erroneous thoſe may be.

Lord PEMBROKE has ſhewn a very extenſive knowledge of this art, ſo neglected as to be almoſt unknown in this country, and without exception, his is the beſt work of the kind in our language; but I think it notwithſtanding too deep and too ſcientific for a treatiſe on Military Equitation, and infinitely beyond the comprehenſion of thoſe whom it is my wiſh to teach and reform,

form, or for the inſtruction of a regimental riding-maſter. This work ſhall be ſo plain and ſimple, that the commander of a regiment of cavalry, though he may never have ſerved before but in the infantry, and not be (what every officer commanding a regiment of horſe or dragoons ſhould be) a good military-manage rider, if he approves the principle, ſhall have it in his power to ſay to his riding-maſter, " This, Sir, is the mode of inſtruction you are to adopt, and not to deviate from; and I ſhall, by comparing your recruits, as they are diſmiſſed from the riding-houſe, with this book, be enabled to diſcover if you have obeyed my orders or not."

It is not my intention, nor indeed would it be my wiſh, were I equal to the taſk, to enter into a detail of the Art of Equitation; for I believe the only part of it neceſſary for cavalry is that which is indiſpenſably ſo, to render each individual of a ſquadron capa-

ble of executing all manœuvres required in battle. All that I wiſh of a horſe ſoldier in reſpect to his knowledge of the art, is confined to half a dozen ſimple actions:

1ſt. To advance his horſe at any pace ordered, from the halt.

2d. To turn him to either hand.

3d. To gallop to the right or left.

4th. To ſtop him.

5th. To rein him back.

6th. To paſſage to the right or left.

In all which he may be complete in three months, mounting and diſmounting, and all ſtable duties included.

Trifling as theſe qualifications may appear, I firmly believe there are not in the ſervice at this moment twenty men who poſſeſs them; and yet twenty men well acquainted with them would in three months form as many regiments of dragoons.

To inſtruct a dragoon or trooper in an extenſive knowledge of the art might be attended

attended with many diſadvantages; thoſe which ſeem the moſt ſtriking, are

1ſt. The length of time neceſſary for attaining this degree of perfection.

2d. The fatigue of a campaign will, in all probability, weaken the horſe ſo far as to deprive him of his uſual ſenſibility to the aids of his rider, and conſequently make him unpleaſant to one who has been accuſtomed to ride a lively horſe; and though perhaps not ſo weak, or reduced, as to be quite unſerviceable, yet in this ſtate the rider would endeavour to avoid ever mounting him till he had recruited his ſtrength and ſpirits; and in hopes of having him replaced by a freſh one, be tempted to get rid of him by neglect, or even loſe him in the field on the firſt opportunity.

3d. The continual and unavoidable waving of the line would occaſion falſe aids to be given, and worry both man and horſe when too high dreſſed.

A ſchool

A ſchool for military equitation, where regiments of cavalry might ſend pupils, who when ſufficiently taught might be appointed *Inſtructors*, was an idea of Monſ. le Compte DRUMMOND de MELFORD, an officer whoſe abilities are well known, and from whoſe work I am not aſhamed to acknowledge I extract ſome of the materials to complete this.

Dragoons are as uſeful and formidable an arm as can be brought into the field, when they are good and clever; as they are ſuppoſed to be capable of acting in both the capacities of horſe and foot, but if they are not perfect, I will venture to ſay they are nearly uſeleſs; becauſe a body of men who have to learn one thing only, muſt be more perfect than thoſe who have to learn that, and another. Thus it is natural to ſuppoſe a battalion would be preferable to them for foot buſineſs, and that cavalry would be equally good, if not ſuperior, to them

them when mounted: therefore they ſhould be perfect in both capacities; for unleſs they combine both, they can only be bad cavalry and indifferent infantry, or bad infantry and indifferent cavalry. The horſe is however a very material part, for if he is not properly trained, inſtead of being an aſſiſtance and ſupport to the man, he becomes an incumbrance. It is then abſolutely neceſſary to teach him to be handy and manageable,

" To wind, to ſtop, to run directly on,
" His corporal motion governed by my ſpirit."

That is, the motions of the horſe ſhould be governed by the ſkill of the rider, who muſt firſt be inſtructed how to govern; for as the untaught horſe is an incumbrance to a taught horſeman, ſo will the untaught horſeman be to the taught horſe; thus, the untaught part of this arm, by its aukwardneſs, would deprive the perfect part of its power, and, in all probability, the firſt

affair

affair they would get into, they both would be killed.

There is a great difficulty attending the attempt to teach the manage method of riding in this country, becauſe the national one is ſo very different, and however well the latter may be adapted to the common purpoſes of hunting, &c. yet large connected bodies of horſemen would find it impoſſible to move with that preciſion neceſſary, if they adopted it in their various manœuvres. The manage however, to a certain point appears well calculated to render any evolutions as practicable to numbers as to a ſingle horſe. Thus it is ſeen in countries where the manage ſyſtem is unknown, that their cavalry are almoſt always beaten by an inferior number of well-trained, or indeed indifferently *trained* cavalry. Notwithſtanding the ſuperior excellence of their horſes, the native cavalry of India were beaten by a ſmaller number of Britiſh dragoons

goons in the war with TIPPOO; and the Hungarian huſſars, unleſs immenſely overpowered by numbers, were always victorious over the Turks, though their horſes, in point of vigour, ſpeed, and wind, are confeſſedly ſuperior to the Hungarian horſe, the beſt the emperor has for his cavalry. This ſhews the advantage of good over bad riding, and *that* regiment whoſe horſemen are individually the beſt, muſt neceſſarily be the beſt collectively. In the courſe of a campaign it will loſe fewer horſes, than any other regiment which has been worked equally with it, but which is inferior to it in point of horſemanſhip. It now remains for me to prove that the preſent ſyſtem, which is much the ſame throughout the cavalry, is contrary to every principle of true horſemanſhip, both in the inſtruction of man and horſe.

In the firſt place, I ſhall take notice of their method of breaking horſes. The very

title given to the aſſiſtants in the riding-houſes is enough to condemn it----Rough Riders! and very rough riders they are; gentleneſs and good temper are baniſhed from the riding-houſe, and war is declared againſt every animal that enters it, unleſs he is naturally more patient and meek than an aſs, and even theſe qualities will not ſecure him altogether from the lacerating laſhes of the mercileſs rough riders, who immediately vote him ſulky. If he has a proper degree of vivacity, he is ſtigmatized with the character of a *Rum Jockey*, and the whip raiſes a devil in him which all the ſkill of the learned equeſtrians cannot lay. Patience is a word not known in their vocabulary, and they expect a great unwieldy ſtiff animal to be ſuppled, and to acquire in ten leſſons what might be looked upon as conſiderable progreſs if he attained in fifty. The common effects of teaching the horſe to canter, before he has been ſuppled

(which

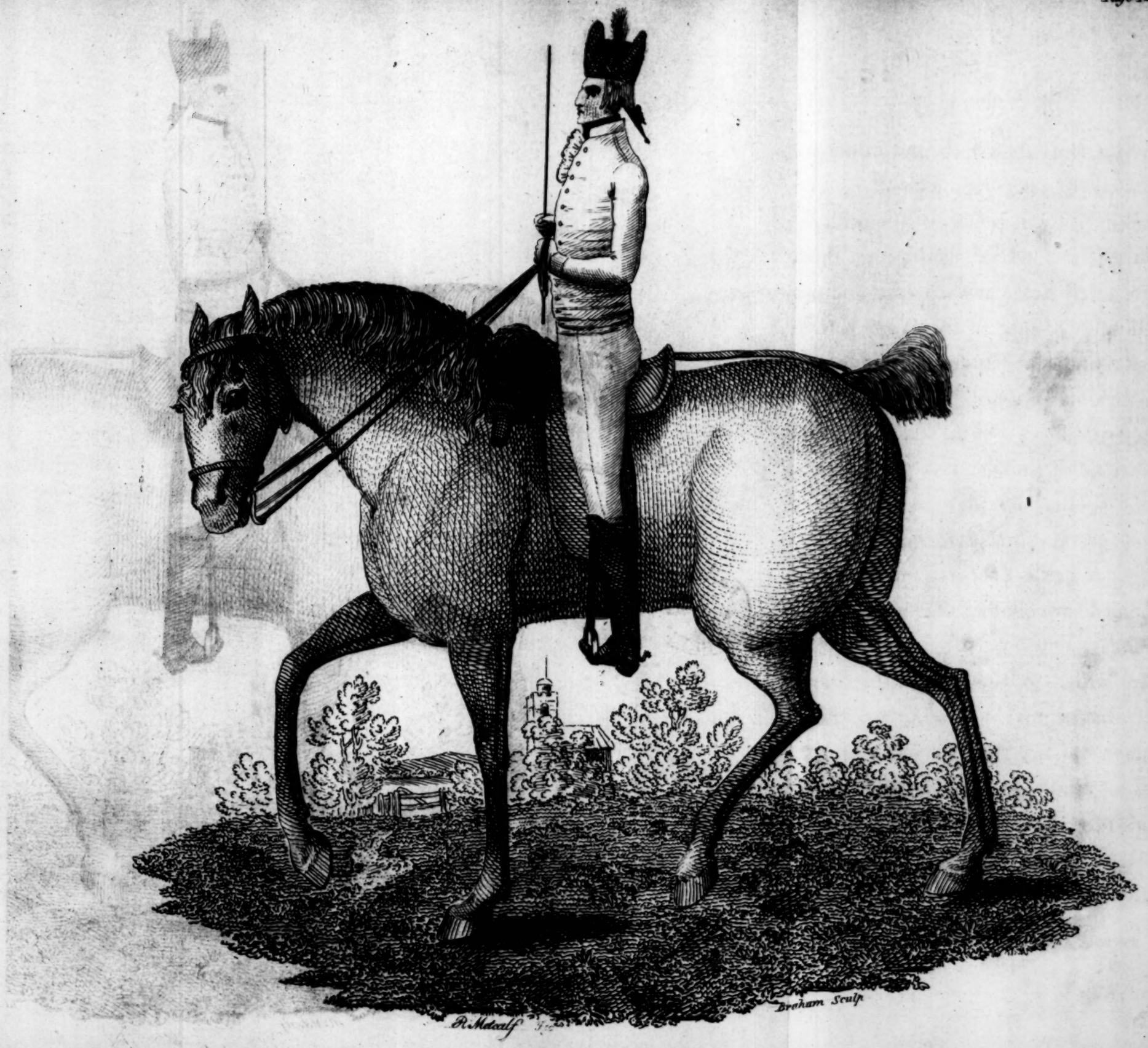
(which they conſtantly do) are curbs, and not unfrequently ſpavins, and thus he is often ſpoiled, and rendered unfit for ſervice before he quits the riding-ſchool. The paſſage is never given him properly. His head is always turned the wrong way, which is the ſame as blinding him; for to prevent him looking the way he is going, renders him liable to run againſt obſtructions, which if he ſaw he would naturally avoid. Very ſeldom indeed is he taught to gallop to the left as well as to the right, a neglect which leaves half the horſe as ſtiff as ever.

Correction is often neceſſary, but it ſhould be well timed and given with temper, and one blow will often ſuffice; for the horſe recollects his fault and conſequent correction; if he repeats it, the correction muſt be repeated; but ſevere flogging continued for a long time will only enrage and frighten the animal without correcting his fault.

Having thus ſhewn the improper method adopted by our riding-maſters in horſe breaking, I will point out the miſtaken notion entertained of inſtructing the man, who unleſs he rides with eaſe and comfort to himſelf cannot ſit for a long time on his horſe; and if he is cramped and ſtiffened he certainly is not at his eaſe. See plate I. you will there, gentle reader, behold not a caricature, for it was taken from life, but a ſoldier placed by his riding-maſter, who, proud of his performance, in his own language exults over it----" Should not be aſhamed for nobody to ſee him, if he always ſat ſo."

In order to procure this elegant eaſy ſeat, he begins by poking up the man's chin in the air, then he ſqueezes his arms and his elbows cloſe to his ſide, like a fowl truſſed for the ſpit; the legs are then pulled ſtraight down from the hips, that they hang over the ſaddle like a pair of tongs,

throwing



R. Metcalf

Braham Sculp.

throwing him up at the ſame time on his fork, ſo that the part deſigned by nature to ſit upon, is on this occaſion relieved from its accuſtomed employment. This might ſuit one of Candide's unfortunate matrons, but is undoubtedly a very inconvenient and unſafe ſeat for a perſon who has not ſuffered the loſs thoſe poor ladies did.*

The various inconveniences which muſt ariſe from ſuch a ſeat are obvious. That it is unnatural, therefore bad, is plain. Does the plough boy ſit in that manner on his horſe as he rides home from his work? No! you ſee him ſit down plump (I make uſe of this word as it expreſſes very ſtrongly the ſeat all men ought to have on horſeback) his legs hang eaſy by his horſe's ſide, his hand is forward holding the rein. Tell him how he may indicate to the horſe, by the preſſure of one leg and a turn of the

* Vide Candide.

wriſt,

wriſt, the way he wiſhes him to go; teach his hand to have a *ſympathetic ſenſation* with his horſe's mouth, neither to hold himſelf on by the bit, nor let his horſe's head hang down between his legs, and he will be excelled by very few riders in our ſervice.

The ſucceeding pages will contain the method I think moſt proper, becauſe it is moſt natural, to render a horſe, of any deſcription, tractable, pleaſant and ſafe, and the following chapters will point out the method of riding him pleaſantly and without danger. I have endeavoured to be plain and intelligible, even to thoſe who may have never made the art their ſtudy.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

OF TRAINING THE TROOP HORSE.

THE great object in dreſſing a horſe is to ſupple him in every joint, and every muſcle, by which his limbs and his whole frame acquire a greater elaſticity, and he of courſe becomes more active; this is not to be effected by merely lunging him, but by the hand and ſkill of the horſeman; he will, every day he is well rode, continue to acquire more figure and eaſe in his gait, and become more pliable.

A horſe intended only for the manage, like a good dancer, as long as he has youth, vigour, and conſtitution on his ſide, will at each leſſon acquire more agility; but as it is a troop or war horſe, and not a manage horſe, which is the ſubject of this work, the method of training and preparing

paring him for the ſquadron is what I ſhall endeavour to explain.

In the firſt place then I ſhall ſuppoſe he has never had a ſaddle on his back; it will be neceſſary to accuſtom him to undergo that operation. Great patience and much quietneſs muſt be obſerved by the riding-maſter in doing this. Having firſt put a ſnaffle bridle into his mouth, and a caveſon on his noſe, with the lunge buckled to the centre ring held by the riding-maſter; let one of his aſſiſtants approach the horſe on the near ſide with a ſaddle, having a ſurcingle hanging over the end of it, which he muſt take care to hang *clear* over the horſe and ſaddle, on either ſide; then place it gently on his back; this done, ſooth him, and make much of him, the man continuing to hold the ſaddle on the horſe; if he attempts to kick it off, the riding-maſter muſt raiſe his noſe quietly, not by a ſnatch, as high as he can, which will prevent him.

This

This is enough for the firſt leſſon, and ſhould be practiſed only after he has finiſhed his leſſon in the lunge, as ſhould each attempt to ſaddle him, until he is brought to bear it patiently, and quietly, nor ſhould he on any account be mounted till that is the caſe.

The ſecond day, having placed the ſaddle as before directed, let the man reach the off ſide of the ſurcingle, and bring it gently under his belly, taking care not to tickle him, and put the end of the ſtrap through the buckle two inches, but not ſtrain it till he has got ſo good a hold of it that he may be certain of ſecuring the ſaddle faſt to the back; not by ſuddenly drawing up the ſurcingle, but as gradually as poſſible; probably this will make the horſe plunge a little, and ſhould he kick the ſaddle off, it will be a buſineſs of time to get him to bear it at all. He ſhould ſtand and feed with his ſaddle on, during the firſt leſſons.

When he can bear to have the ſaddle girted up, and not till then, with the ſame gentleneſs put the crupper on.

FIRST CLASS.

14 days.

The firſt leſſon to give the horſe is in the lunge; and to get him to trot round to the right and left is all that can be expected the firſt three or four days. Each time you change him from the right to the left in the lunge, make him approach you by ſhortening the lunge in your hand, and careſs him before you ſend him off again.

Having made him acquainted with the lunge, you may begin to ſupple him by making him bend his head and neck well into the circle, and throw out the haunches; thus making his fore legs deſcribe a ſmaller circle, juſt within that deſcribed by the hind. Continue this leſſon for ten days. After each lunging he may be mounted, but

but muſt not be made to move; as all required at firſt is for him to ſuffer a man to mount and diſmount. If he is good tempered, and ſuffers himſelf to be mounted without reſiſtance, you may, towards the latter days, let him carry the man to the riding-houſe door, or ten yards; but by no means attempt to trot him mounted in the lunge, till the end of ten days at leaſt.

If he has been mounted before he was recruited, on no account mount him again, till he has been well ſuppled in the lunge; all you can do is, if his condition will allow it, to give him longer leſſons; you may gain a little time in that caſe, and mount him after ten days lunging inſtead of fourteen; that is, the four firſt days, compriſing the firſt leſſon, may be omitted, and you may begin at the ſecond. This *firſt claſs* compriſes only fourteen days.

SECOND CLASS.

12 days

You may now mount him in the lunge; and having accuſtomed him to carry patiently in a walk, by degrees quicken him to a gentle trot; the rider bending his fore-hand into the circle, and accuſtoming him to the aid of the leg by preſſing it againſt his ſide, until he, by flinching from it, appears to obey it, at the ſame time cautiouſly avoid giving him the ſpur, which ſhould never be done but as a correction, and then decidedly. Tickling with the ſpur is very likely to give horſes a habit of kicking at it with one leg, and ſome learn this trick however carefully they may have been ridden; the beſt mode of correcting this fault I know of, is to pinch the horſe hard between both heels, and eaſe your hand at the ſame time. As ſoon as he has made his ſpring, collect him again, and try the calf of the leg to him; ſhould he again kick,

kick, repeat the correction, till he will bear the ſpur---Obſerve, I have directed that you are to *pinch* or ſqueeze the horſe between the heels, and not to kick him, for that very often makes a horſe reſtive and unruly. I would not recommend a horſe addicted to this fault, to be releaſed from the lunge, till he has completely left it off.

Whilſt the horſe remains in the lunge, the man muſt make him acquainted with the aid of both hand and leg. You ſhould raiſe and place his head well, never letting him get his noſe down, for which reaſon I recommend ſtrongly a ſnaffle bridle with running reins, with the ends buckled to the ſaddle about half way down the ſkirt, and to ſuch horſes as puſh out their noſes, a head ſtall martingale; but to all horſes a common martingale, placed ſo as to act on that part of the rein between the ſaddle and the bit. With this bridle a horſe's head may be raiſed

very

very high and his noſe well placed, if not uſed with violence. It is needleſs to add that he ſhould be changed to the right or left frequently, and ſhould the horſe whilſt in the lunge ſtrike into a gallop, if it be not falſe or diſunited, let him continue for a round if he pleaſes, but do not urge him to it. In uſing the *running rein*, there muſt be great attention ſhewn in the management of it. The power of it is ſo great, that it requires a very ſteady hand; in bending the horſe to one hand, be careful to eaſe off the oppoſite rein: to attempt to bend the horſe to the left, and at the ſame time to keep the right rein ſtrained, may make him reſtive, as he will try every means to get rid of this irkſome confinement. This is the only way to ſupple, and to produce an accord between the mouth, ſhoulders, and haunches, which if you do not, your horſe is unbroke. A horſe is deemed unbroke, or as a celebrated French writer ſays, "il n'eſt pas fait, s'il

n'eſt

n'eſt pas uni des epaules, de la main & des jarrets."

The horſe may now be releaſed from the lunge and worked round the houſe. Firſt in a ſlow well collected trot, then in a faſter trot, and laſtly in his full trot; which two laſt paces muſt not be attempted till he performs the ſlow pace with eaſe and exactneſs, keeping time as it were to muſic. In the courſe of this ſecond claſs, which will contain twelve leſſons, he may be brought to his faſteſt trot, if he ſhews a diſpoſition to be active, for it is obvious, that all horſes are not equally ſtiff or equally ſupple, ſome requiring to be kept for a much longer time at the different exerciſes recommended in each claſs, but none for leſs.

THIRD CLASS.

This third claſs will contain eighteen days or leſſons, and much muſt be done in this time: he muſt be put upon his haunches and

and finiſhed all but galloping, which is the laſt thing taught, and the eaſieſt if the horſe has been properly worked in the foregoing claſſes.

The beginning of each day's leſſon ſhould be trotting, with frequent changing, and on ſmall circles, and ſhould finiſh with what is generally called *ſhoulder in*, (but which in fact is not, that being one of the moſt difficult airs attempted in the manage.) To proceed in going to the right, bend his fore hand by ſhortening the right rein; I ſay his fore-hand, becauſe the legs and cheſt muſt be *half faced* to the right, and preſerve that poſition as he advances, his hind legs moving ſtraight, and carrying the greateſt part of the weight on them; to make them do which, hold your horſe in, on the mouth-piece of his bridle, and throw your heels back, threatening him with the ſpur: do not hold him too hard, or he will rear up; but if he is properly held, he will be found

Shoulder in
Pembroke 39-42
Sp. 57.

to

to champ on his bit, and yield with his under jaw to its preſſure. As this leſſon is very ſevere, it ſhould be ſhort and frequently repeated: for example, the horſe ſhould not be conſtrained after *once* he *has obeyed*, for more than one long ſide, and one corner of the houſe; releaſe him then by degrees, and immediately repeat it. The paſſage muſt alſo in each day's leſſon of this claſs be given thus; put him in the ſame attitude required for the (ſometimes called) ſhoulder-in, but inſtead of forcing him up to his bit, preſs him hard by degrees with the calf of the oppoſite leg, and he will move ſideways; take care however he does not go back, (which horſes in learning this are apt to do) and that his fore-hand always leads. Reining back is neceſſary to be taught in this claſs, and care ſhould be taken to make him move back in a ſtraight line; horſes in the firſt attempt at this are very aukward, and throw their *croups* from ſide to ſide.

The Paſſage

Reining back

The bit is never to be put in the mouth till he has been galloped and finiſhed.

A very neceſſary accompliſhment which is never practiſed, ſhould alſo, and during the remaining time he is detained in the ſchool, be taught both to man and horſe; I mean leaping; not flying, but cool ſtanding leaps; if the horſe during the remaining claſſes was, until he could perform tolerably well, firſt led over, and then rode over a bar at the finiſh of each leſſon, he would with ſuch practice leap any hedge or other low fence, which now proves an inſurmountable obſtruction to moſt of the light and to all the heavy cavalry. When in the drill, after his diſmiſſal from the ſchool, he might be practiſed at ditches.

Leaping.

The ſucceeding claſs which is the fourth, contains eighteen leſſons or days, and is intended for the gallop.

FOURTH

FOURTH CLASS.

OF THE GALLOP.

18 days

In the firſt attempt at this pace, chooſe that hand to which the horſe is moſt ſupple; for as men are more active and perfect with their right hand, generally ſpeaking, than with their left, from being accuſtomed to uſe the right hand moſt, ſo horſes naturally acquire a greater agility with one leg than with another, from uſing it moſt when colts; and I have remarked, that either from this cauſe (or what I think is more likely, from the perſon who broke him having ridden ſtiffer to one ſide than to the other) there is a greater ſuppleneſs in one ſide than in the other. After the caveſon and lunge are fixed on his head, order the rider to preſent him to the gallop, which is done by putting your horſe together, that is, ſetting him on his haunches, and feeling

both reins equally, and applying both legs to his ſides, but the outſide harder than the inſide. This will throw his croup into the circle, and oblige him to ſtrike off with the proper leg, which when he has done, ſuſtain him, or keep him to it by threatening with your whip, aſſiſting with your legs and voice, but not uſing your ſpurs. When he gallops tolerably well to the right, (which requires ſix leſſons at leaſt) he muſt be taught to gallop to the left, which will alſo require ſix leſſons more, and ſix ſucceeding ones out of the lunge will be neceſſary to teach him to change on the gallop from right to left. The bit may now be placed in his mouth, and for the ſpace of ſix days more repeat every leſſon of the third and fourth claſſes, that his mouth may be accuſtomed to the bit by the ſteady hands of the inſtructors previous to his being delivered to the men for the drill.

The

The foregoing courſe has taken up ſixty-two days, or, Sundays included, ten weeks, which with perſons properly qualified to act as horſe-breakers, is as ſhort a time as can be, conſidering the kind of horſe on which our light and heavy cavalry are mounted; but is enough. I then recommend a ſufficient number of the beſt horſemen in the regiment to be ſought for, and a drill to be formed of all horſes in the ſame ſtate of forwardneſs, to be commanded by one of the rough riders when leaping the bar and the ditch. The horſe evolutions must be practiſed; the two firſt days in a walk, the ſix ſucceeding ones in a trot, and four more in a gallop. I ſhould now conſider the horſe fit for the ſquadron when properly accoutred.

The ſuperiority a regiment riding well and on well broke horſes would have over one where the horſe required as much room and as much time to turn as a broad wheeled waggon,

waggon, is too obvious to need any further comment.

I muſt however beg leave to notice a curious fact, on which I will afterwards hazard an opinion. The Huſſars are, generally ſpeaking, men of five feet nine inches high, and they ride horſes little more than fourteen hands. One would imagine a man ſo much *under horſed* would be uſeleſs rather than formidable; but the aſtoniſhing agility of theſe people, and the ſervice they have performed, ſufficiently ſhew the contrary. I am therefore led to imagine the reaſons they are ſo under mounted, are---firſt, that unleſs a Huſſar be extremely active, and can turn almoſt as quick as a man on foot, he is uſeleſs; therefore agility is required in the animal more than ſtrength; but that is no reaſon why both agility and ſtrength ſhould not be combined in him if poſſible. Secondly, a horſe with agility and ſtrength, equal to the

the weight of a man five feet nine inches high, is both expenſive and ſcarce; and as a Huſſar ought to be eaſily and cheaply replaced, there generally being a great expenditure of them, as they are always at work, the preference was given to the activity of the animal, and the Huſſar was put upon a ſmall horſe of low price; but like all other ſmall horſes, of much more agility than a dragoon horſe. From his ſmall ſize, alſo were derived one other advantage, and, in my opinion, one great diſadvantage. The advantage is, that the little horſe fills himſelf ſooner, and takes leſs forage to do it than the large one; and the diſadvantage is, the Huſſar cannot leap, being too low and too heavily loaded to attempt it. How capitally might a regiment of Huſſars be mounted in Great Britain and Ireland, where there are abundance of horſes able to carry from twelve to fourteen ſtone, about fifteen hands high,

bred

bred on the commons, particularly in Wales, to be purchaſed for twenty pounds a piece. They are not very handſome, but they have ſhoulders and haunches, capable of very active movements. A regiment thus mounted, the men from five feet three inches to five feet ſix, would be ſuperior to Huſſars, either for ſpeed, agility or ſtrength, nor would they by any means form a deſpicable regiment of dragoons, I mean in point of weight.

Thus concludes my ſyſtem of horſe-breaking, taking up ſeventy-two days, Sundays not included, not quite three months; and as for the moſt part recruit horſes ſeldom are more than four years old, they ſhould on no account be worked harder; ſix, ſeven or eight years old horſes, may by taking double leſſons, if they are in good condition, be finiſhed in half that time.

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE INSTRUCTION OF THE RECRUIT ON HORSEBACK.

I SHALL preface this chapter by obſerving, that although this art may be reduced to a ſcience, I think it unneceſſary to inſtruct the recruit in the theory of its principles. But as this is meant for the uſe of thoſe who are to become inſtructors, it is indiſpenſible to explain the theory of it.

I have made the foregoing obſervation leſt they might be led into the error of conceiving, that detailed explanations were neceſſary for the recruit. I would tell him that when he wants to turn his horſe to the right, he muſt place the bridle hand in the fifth poſition, and apply his right leg to the horſe's ſide.

It here becomes neceſſary to ſpeak more particularly on the poſition of the hand.---The left is called the bridle hand, from its always holding the reins. The arm ſhould fall naturally and with eaſe from the ſhoulder to the elbow, which ſhould be a little advanced, ſo that you may juſt perceive the light between the elbow and the body. The wriſt ſhould be in a line with the elbow, and the hand over the pummel of the ſaddle; yet this poſition of the wriſt can only be laid down as a general rule; for much muſt depend on the manner in which the horſe carries his head; if high, the wriſt muſt be dropped a little to lower his noſe; and if low, muſt be held higher to raiſe it. But when the wriſt is once placed, the elbow ſhould be immoveable, as all motion ſhould proceed from the wriſt alone.

The hand is now to be placed in the firſt poſition, viz. the nails ſhould be oppoſite the buttons of the waiſtcoat, and of courſe the

knuckles towards the horſe's mane, the little finger being on a line with the bone of the elbow. From this poſition it is capable of performing four movements, or taking four other poſitions for various purpoſes, which will hereafter be explained, and ſome of which are accompanied by a help or movement of one or both legs. The hand is generally carried in the firſt poſition, when the horſe is going forward, and not ſhewing any diſpoſition to turn on either ſide, to throw up his head, or to make any falſe movement.

The ſecond poſition conſiſts in turning the knuckles upwards, and then ſlackening the rein as after halting; or to give the horſe the liberty of moving forward by eaſing his mouth, and this is uſually accompanied with cloſing the legs to the horſe's ſide.

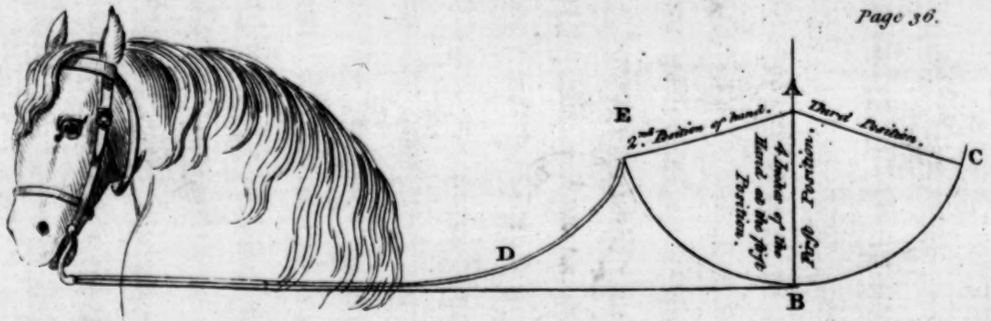
The third poſition is to check the horſe, in order to make him drop from a quick pace into a ſlower one, or to ſtop him en-

tirely, and requires the knuckles to be turned downwards. No greater or wider movement of the hand can be neceſſary, or ought to be allowed, either to ſlacken the rein, even in the faſteſt pace, or from that pace to ſtop the horſe, than what is called the ſecond and third poſitions.

The fourth poſition conſiſts in carrying the little finger to the left, and inclining the knuckles upwards, by which movement the horſe will turn his fore-hand to the left, and if the left leg be applied to his flank at the ſame time, he will turn as long as the hand and leg are continued in theſe poſitions.

The fifth poſition conſiſts in carrying the little finger outward, to the right, and inclining the knuckles downwards, and if the right leg be preſſed to the flank, the horſe will do the ſame to the right as he did to the left in the fourth poſition.

FIRST



D. *Shews that by moving the line* B.A. *into the Position* E.A. *That the Rein must be Slack. as it Shortens the distance from the Bit to* B. *very near 4 Inches. The hand is Supposed to be 4 Inches from the Top of the Knuckles of the first Finger to the lower side of the little Finger.*

FIRST CLASS.

I now proceed to divide my inſtructions into claſſes, in the ſame manner as was done in the preceding chapter.

I ſuppoſe the recruit to be ſo far advanced in his foot-drill as to be quite ſuppled; if he comes to the riding houſe before he has attained that, he will probably make but ſlow progreſs. He ſhould firſt be taught to ſaddle his horſe in ſuch a way that the ſaddle may not pinch or bruiſe the withers, and this muſt be firmly impreſſed in his mind, by being repeated to him every day during his remaining in the firſt claſs. The ſaddle ſhould be placed about ſix or ſeven inches behind the withers, and the crupper buckled ſo as to prevent it, whilſt ungirted, from getting forwards; but when the girts are once drawn, the crupper ſhould not be on the ſtretch, for that would not only ſet the

the horſe a kicking, but gall his tail, the conſequence of which often renders a horſe unſerviceable for ſeveral weeks. It may produce a violent inflammation and ſore, not to be cured but with great time and attention. To avoid this, you muſt inſtruct your recruit never to have his crupper tight, and that if the ſaddle will not keep in its place without the crupper, it does not fit the horſe properly, and the recruit ſhould be inſtructed to apply to his quarter-maſter to get it altered. You next tell him to be very careful to draw the buckle of the girth two or three inches at leaſt on both ſides above the bottom of the pannel, or elſe the buckles will fret and gall the ſkin. If the pannel be thin and hard, he ſhould report it to his quarter-maſter, and deſire to have it new ſtuffed, or a new one. Make him unſaddle and ſaddle his horſe in your preſence, or that of your aſſiſtants, and ſee that he pays attention to every particular in detail. The

riding-

riding-maſter is certainly the perſon who has, or ought to have bitted the horſes of the regiment; I therefore ſuppoſe the horſes to have the bridle properly placed in the mouth.

Of the ſhape and properties of the bit, a moſt powerful machine when properly conſtructed and managed, but ineffectual and likely to do miſchief when improperly conſtructed or managed, I ſhall ſpeak very fully in another place.

The recruit ſhould be taught that the bridle is to hang in the horſe's mouth, ſo as not to pucker up the corner of it, but juſt to touch it, and the mouth-piece will then reſt on the bars, which is the proper place for it: that the curb chain muſt be placed neat and ſmooth, and ought never to be looſer, than to admit the finger between it and the jaw. The noſe band buckled juſt in the ſame degree of tightneſs round the noſe over the bridoon head-ſtall, which muſt

muſt be preciſely of the ſame length with the bridle.

You then proceed to give him the method of mounting and diſmounting, which in the heavy dragoons is made much longer than in the light, by an uſeleſs ſet of motions. I think the following motions would be as good as any.

At the word "*Prepare to mount*," let the man who is ſtanding on the near ſide of his horſe's head, turn quickly to the right, ſtepping back at the ſame time, ſo as to be placed oppoſite the ſhoulders; then let him take up the reins as quick as poſſible, and putting the little finger of the left hand between the near and off rein, let him graſp both together with the three other fingers, along with a lock of the mane, and ſhorten the reins a little, by drawing the ends with the right hand through the left, and thus letting them fall on the off ſhoulder.

The

The right hand then will be occupied by holding the ſtirrup: at the next word, "*Mount*," let the man put his left foot in the ſtirrup, and at the ſame moment his right hand to the back part or cantle of the ſaddle; let him ſpring nimbly off the ground with the right foot, aſſiſting himſelf with his hand, and throwing his whole weight on the left foot in the ſtirrup. Then he ſhould raiſe his right thigh as high as he can, to clear the cloak, or whatever may be on the pillion or pad, wheel himſelf round into his ſeat, and all this ſhould be done in leſs than a ſecond.---Being there ſeated, he ſhould let go the mane, and with his right hand draw the bridoon rein behind the left, and place it in it, which he immediately raiſes to the firſt poſition, at the ſame time placing his right foot in the ſtirrup. I ſhould have remarked that the firſt thing to be done on the recruit's leading

his horſe into the riding-ſchool is to put on a caveſon and lunge.

The man when mounted may be conſidered as conſiſting of three parts---two moveable, and one immoveable. The body from the head to the hips, and the legs from the knees downwards, are moveable. This leaves the thighs immoveable. In placing the man, cautiouſly avoid touching or even mentioning his feet or legs; if you do, or attempt to place the leg (as it is called by the riding-maſters) you will certainly give a ſtiffneſs to it, which will for ever prevent his becoming a horſeman. Begin with his head, and tell him to hold it back, not *up*; for holding up the head is throwing up the chin; but holding *back* the head is drawing it up from reſting on the collar-bone, and placing it even between the ſhoulders. Let his arms hang down on each ſide, as if they were coat-ſleeves ſtuffed. By bending the

the ſmall of the back, and forcing the lower part of the cheſt forwards, the ſhoulders will be carried rather behind than in a direct perpendicular.

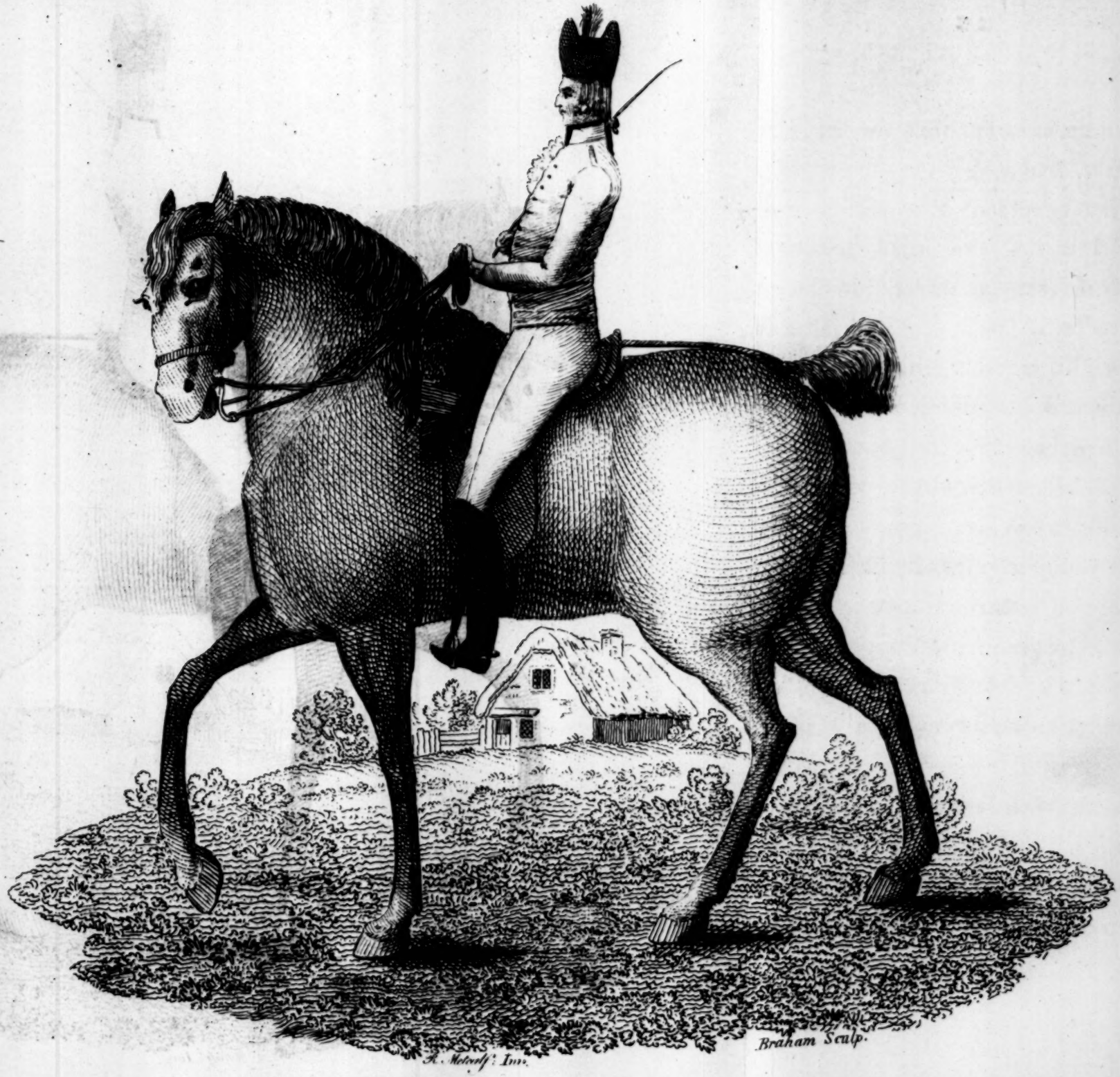
OF THE THIGH AND SEAT.

The common method uſed by riding-maſters to give a man a ſeat, is to place him exactly on the fork, neglecting to bring that part deſigned by nature for the ſeat, on the ſaddle, and then ſeizing him by the foot, to twiſt his legs as a dentiſt does a tooth to looſen it. This ſtiffens the knee joint, and gives the legs and thighs the ſame poſition in the ſaddle that a pair of tongs would have; whereas if they would content themſelves with telling the man to turn *the outſide of his thigh* well up, that is, to force it round towards the horſe's head, and not to ſtiffen the knees, the conſe-

quence would be, that the leg would turn with it, and come into the proper place.

Having placed the man in his ſaddle, give him his reins in his left hand, properly divided, as directed in the mounting inſtruction, (page 40,) and put a ſwitch in his right, directing him to carry it in the manner the regiment carry their ſwords. This will be the means of accuſtoming him to ride afterwards with more eaſe when he has his ſword given him.

A young beginner ſhould not be hurried; before he is made to trot in the lunge, he ſhould feel himſelf a little confident, and it ought to be from him, or at his deſire, that the horſe ſhould quicken his pace; his being without ſtirrups, if you begin too roughly with him, will, for the firſt leſſons, make him either very unſteady, or elſe he will cramp and ſtiffen himſelf to keep on his ſaddle, by holding on with his legs.



R. Metcalf's Imp.

Braham Sculp.

legs. He ſhould be lunged fourteen days at leaſt, firſt on eaſy horſes, very ſlowly, and as you perceive him acquire a ſeat, quicken the trot by degrees.

He ſhould practiſe frequent changes to the right and left, and at each change obſerve that he puts his hand to the proper poſition. When you ſee that the movement of the hand begins to be a little familiar to him, he may be inſtructed in the helps with the legs; which are as follow:---Firſt, to indicate to your horſe your intention of moving forwards or faſter.

Secondly, to make him place his croup in any ſituation you pleaſe, to make him paſſage, and to turn him to either ſide.

The legs and ſpurs are alſo made uſe of as corrections. In giving the leg, take care not to uſe *the ſpur*, unleſs the horſe will not obey you; therefore begin with fixing the knee well to the ſaddle, and then turn out the toe, apply very gently the calf of the

the leg to the horſe's flank, carrying the foot *well back*. If touching the ſide with the leg gently does not produce obedience in the horſe, ſqueeze him harder; if he will not anſwer that, pinch him with the ſpurs; and the next time you threaten him with your leg, you may depend on his obeying your movement---but avoid, if poſſible, uſing the ſpur. Thus when the legs and hand have a ſympathetic ſenſation, aſſiſting each other mechanically, the horſeman may be told, that his hand and legs are in uniſon, which is the beſt tranſlation I can give of the French term, "*l'accordance de la main & des jambes*," without which a man cannot be a horſeman.

I have ſaid the legs muſt aſſiſt mechanically the help of the hand; by this I mean, that the horſeman ſhould contract ſuch a habit of uſing his legs to aſſiſt the hand, that though he may be occupied by talking to company he is riding with, yet if the road has

has a ſudden turn to the right, the hand ſhould mechanically fall into the fifth poſition, and the right leg be at the ſame inſtant applied as above directed, to his flank, to turn his croup, without diſcontinuing the converſation.

I have before obſerved, that ſome of the helps of the hand are accompanied with aid from the one or both legs. Thus, at the ſecond poſition, which is to eaſe the hand, or rather the mouth by releaſing it from the preſſure of the bit; if, as may be the caſe to a dull horſe, this motion does not ſufficiently indicate to him your intention, apply both legs gently to him, and he will immediately move forward; but if one only is applied, it will make him only move his hind quarters *from* the preſſure; this ſhews therefore clearly, that if at the ſame time the hand is put in the fourth or fifth poſition, which will inevitably turn his forehand, the leg be applied, it will haſten the evolution by

ſuſtaining

ſuſtaining his hind-quarters. For, if you bend a horſe's forehand only, and then put him in action, he will move on a circle, inſtead of turning on a pivot, which the preſſure of the leg obliges him to do.

To return to the pupil, (who as he is only to be taught mechanically) muſt be accuſtomed by practice to acquire your method of riding; therefore obſerve that at each turn or changing of hands, *his* legs and hands act together. If at the end of fourteen days trotting and practice he has acquired the habit of uſing his hands and legs at each turn, he may be releaſed, and begin the ſecond claſs.

This, as well as the firſt, ſhould be gone through without ſtirrups, which ſhould not be given till he is diſmiſſed from the ſchool. During the firſt three weeks or eighteen days, nothing but trotting, with frequent changes and circles at each corner, is neceſſary. The next eighteen leſſons or days, after

after a few rounds of trotting and changing, ſhew him how to paſſage, and to rein back, and finiſh each leſſon by a few wheelings.

The third and laſt diviſion of this claſs is twelve days, and ſhould be employed in forming up from ſingle horſemen following one another to two, four, ſix, and eight, and then reducing this again in the ſame way; alſo varying it. Thus from ſingle horſemen forming a front of any given telling or number, ſuch as *Form Front* of eight; and for which reaſon, when the recruits arrive at this ſtate of forwardneſs, they muſt be told off into files, threes, and ſections of eight. Wheeling by threes, which is the method at preſent adopted for a ſquadron to break up in, to go about, or for gaining ground towards a flank, ſhould be practiſed; and trifling as this ſimple evolution appears, it certainly is difficult, for few ſquadrons ever do it well. It cannot be done too ſlowly, as by wheeling on the

center horſe, which muſt turn on its own ground, one horſe muſt wheel forwards round, which is eaſily done, but the other flanker muſt wheel backwards *round*, which is very difficult. He muſt alſo in this diviſion of the ſecond claſs, be inſtructed how to turn to the right or left, and to the right or left about. I recommend the leaping bar at a low hole at firſt, for the finiſh of each day's leſſon, as he quits the ſchool, on a horſe that can leap tolerably well.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FOREGOING CLASS.

The time I have allotted for the exerciſes of this ſecond claſs is very ſhort; but the impatience of commanding officers is very often ſo great, that they will ſcarcely allow time for any thing to be taught the recruit, but mounting and diſmounting, before they put him into ſquadron.

In the firſt claſs of this chapter the recruit

cruit learns very little but to get a tolerably ſteady ſeat on his ſaddle, his horſe merely carrying him; the ſecond claſs perfects his ſeat, and teaches him to ride, that is,

To move forward from the halt in
To ſtop from
To turn to the right or left in
} a walk, trot, or gallop.

To retain the horſe from
To quicken him from
} one pace to another.

To rein him back and to paſſage.

With reſpect to the firſt of theſe objects: The hand eaſed, and the legs applied to the ſides, will make him walk off; the ſame motion, with a harder ſqueeze of the leg, will make him trot off.

The gallop is explained in the third claſs of this chapter.

Of the ſtop or halt. Whatever degree of retention you would indicate to your horſe, the motion of the hand will always be the

third poſition; for it is by an imperceptible ſway of the body backward, that the horſe is ſtopped in all paces; however from the full trot and the gallop, in order to ſtop the horſe on his haunches, which ſhould always be done, the bridle hand ſhould alſo be gently and gradually raiſed, at the ſame moment the body inclines backward, and the legs likewiſe, whenever the full ſtop is marked to the horſe, ſhould be near his ſide, and the heels rather back; this will oblige him to ſuſtain the whole weight of himſelf and his rider on his hind quarters.

This explains the uſe of the ſecond and third poſition of the hand, and how far the legs can aſſiſt; it alſo ſhews the method of reining back, which is a greater degree of retention than the *full ſtop*, and requires more ſway of the body, and more elevation of the hand, but muſt not be continued; therefore immediately on the horſe's ſhew-

ing

ing his obedience by going backwards, turn your hand to the firſt poſition.

If you intend going farther back, replace your hand and body in the attitude which firſt produced the motion, and ſo continue eaſing and retaining alternately till you have completed your intention. The legs ſhould be near the horſe during the whole action to be ready to aſſiſt in the direction of the croup.

To turn to the right, or right about, the hand is put in the fifth poſition, and the right leg ſupports the croup.

In the turn to the left, or left about, the hand is in the fourth poſition, and the left leg ſupports the croup. It is to be obſerved that a horſe ſhould never turn on his fore legs, if it can poſſibly be avoided, but there ſhould be deſcribed a circle round the hind legs; however, turning on the fore legs is in ſome inſtances unavoidable, as in the

center

center horſe of threes, when endeavouring to turn on his own ground.

The application of the leg to the croup is to prevent it; horſes very frequently lame themſelves by turning on their fore legs, by cauſing a violent extenſion of ſome muſcle of the leg, or by throwing a greater weight on that limb, than it ever was intended to carry. The paſſage is explained in the third claſs of the preceding chapter. p. 25.

THIRD CLASS.

The gallop is the next pace to be taught, nor can there, in my opinion, be any other inſtruction for the man, than that which an inſtructor imparts by his hand and leg to the young horſe; I ſhall therefore refer my reader to the fourth claſs p. 27-8. of the chapter on Training the Troop Horſe, as any inſtruction I can imagine for the man, would be only a repetition of what I ſaid in that place,

place, except that a leſs time will be neceſſary in the lunge, and two days practice to each hand; however it will require a much longer time out of the lunge, as it will be neceſſary for the man to practiſe a great deal in filings, formings, and circles, as directed in the third diviſion of the ſecond claſs. This being finiſhed, the recruit ſhould be diſmiſſed from the ſchool, and a drill formed and practiſed as directed for compleating the recruit horſe.

The ſword exerciſe, an excellent and neceſſary accompliſhment, ſhould now be practiſed. On this exerciſe I will make one obſervation, which is, that the men who have been generally ſelected by regiments to learn this art, have not been good horſemen, and have therefore introduced falſe principles of riding, ſuch as leaning forwards, abandoning the horſe, and urging him forward, without the leaſt command

mand over him, to the very great danger of the rider. This, however, I am told, is by no means either adopted or approved of by the very deſerving officer to whom the army is indebted for this additional and uſeful exerciſe*.

I muſt now warn my reader of two bad habits which dragoons are very apt to contract: The firſt is, wide movements with the hands, partly owing to their never holding their reins ſhort enough.

The ſecond, that of always throwing their body forward on the expectation of the word to *march*, previous to their putting their horſes in motion, in the ſame manner, as badly drilled men, when waiting for the word, will riſe on tiptoe.

Nothing can be worſe than this, and very

* Lord Heathfield, whoſe ſkill in equitation amply repays the great pains he beſtows upon it, told me, that Major Le Marchant diſclaimed any ſuch erroneous practices.

great

great care ſhould be taken to correct this fault, and almoſt all recruits have a natural tendency to it. I was obliged once in the caſe of a man, who was ſo much addicted to it, as not to be conſcious of doing it, to tie a ſtring from his tail to the crupper; the check this gave him when he attempted to riſe, reminded him of his fault, and a few leſſons perfectly corrected him.

It is highly proper and a moſt excellent practice to make a ride halt frequently, and move off together in a trot; this ſhould be performed in the third claſs of this chapter, as alſo changing at the *wall* by a right or left about turn. In ſhort after you have got over the firſt diviſion of the ſecond claſs; the more you vary the leſſon the better.

Throughout theſe two courſes of equitation in the inſtruction both of man and horſe, I have given to each a ſpecific number of days; I do not mean that it ſhould be inferred from hence that no *more* time

ſhould be employed in each claſs, but I am convinced that leſs will not do; however, that muſt be left to the diſcretion of the inſtructor.

I have endeavoured to methodize it by giving the courſe a regular ſucceſſion of exerciſes, increaſing the difficulty of each according to the progreſs of the learner.

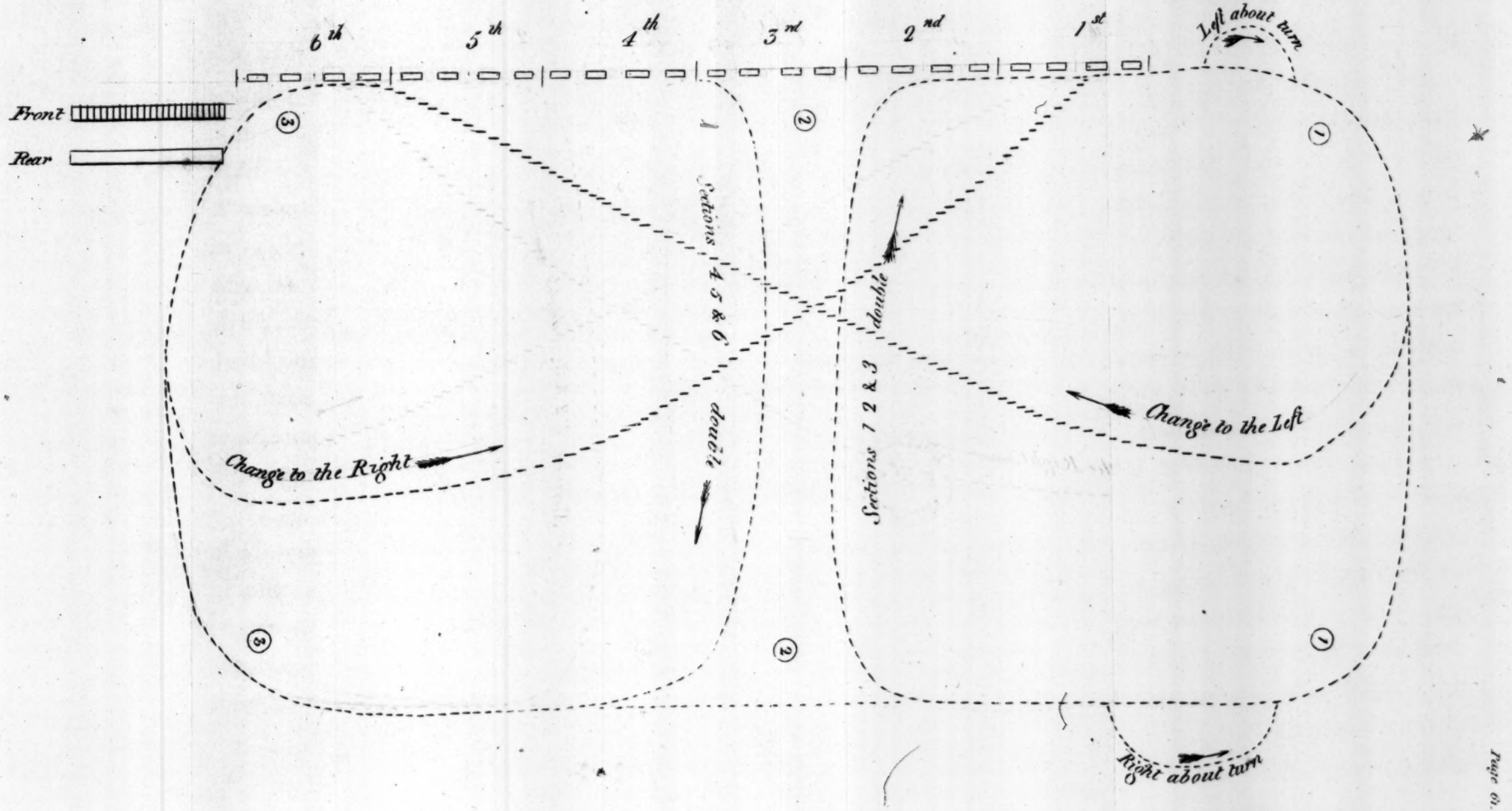
CHAP.

CHAPTER IV.

EVERY field-day, and every time a dragoon mounts his horſe, attended by his officers, he ſhould be made to obſerve a ſtrict attention to good riding, and great care ſhould be taken by every officer commiſſioned or non-commiſſioned, (for which reaſon ſerjeants and corporals ſhould have a little more inſtruction than privates) to correct any fault or bad riding in the courſe of exerciſe; and if it appeared to ariſe from ignorance or inattention, to report ſuch obſervation to the riding-maſter, who, it is almoſt needleſs to add, ſhould attend, but not in the ſquadron on theſe days. One day in the week, all the year round, ſhould be ſet apart for the whole regiment, with the officers, to go to a riding drill; a plan of which will be given; however before I

begin upon that ſubject, I cannot help obſerving how few and trifling the inſtructions are, which moſt regiments give a young officer, who though he may have led the field with fox-hounds, and rode over turnpike gates in his native county, is in all probability, totally unacquainted with the method of riding which is neceſſarily adopted in regiments of cavalry, and which muſt be obſerved by every individual, for one bad rider will cauſe ſuch confuſion as totally to prevent a ſquadron from moving with regularity and preciſion.

The method I have recommended, ſo far from ſpoiling a hunting ſeat, will, in my opinion, give it more force, and be more favourable to the horſes; it will alſo make them go up to, and take their leaps in a much better ſtile.


6th
5th
4th
3rd
2nd
1st
Left about turn
Front
Rear
3
2
1
Sections 4 5 & 6 double
Sections 1 2 & 3 double
Change to the Right
Change to the Left
Right about turn

RIDING DRILL FOR A REGIMENT, TROOP, OR SQUADRON.

When on ground ſufficiently ſpacious, form a column of troops with intervals of about five times the length of the front of a troop. Each troop ſhould be provided with at leaſt ſix ſtrong ſtakes pointed with iron, and an iron collar round the top to prevent the ſtake from ſplitting, when driving into the ground. The troop ſhould then be told off into files from the right, and into ſix ſections. Oppoſite the noſe of the pivot horſe, ſet up one ſtake, and call it No. 1; an officer then caſting his eye along the line from the wheeling flank horſe's noſe muſt *aline*, on the ſtake No. 1, a quarter-maſter, or any man not of the front rank. This done, order your front rank *only* to file ſtraight off by the ſtake, No. 1. When the rank is in file, at twenty yards beyond the

the leading horſe, ſet up another ſtake, and that will be the length of the drill ground. Oppoſite the center put another ſtake; call theſe 2 and 3; the width of the ground ſhould be about one third of the length; this may be eaſily gueſſed, and thence on a line parallel to the firſt, ſet up the other poſts marked No. 1, 2, 3; ſo that No. 1 at each corner may be oppoſite No. 3. Each troop ſhould do the ſame. The rough rider and officers mounted ſhould be within the ſquare, and give the leſſon as follows, which conſiſts of three diviſions or repriſals.

LESSON.

FIRST REPRISAL TO THE RIGHT.

Trot. March (one round)

Sections 1, 2, *and* 3.---*Double from* 2 *to* 2. That will make half your ride; cut the ground in the middle, and then when the other

other half which are ſections 4, 5, and 6, come oppoſite the next number 2;

Sections 4, 5, *and* 6.---*Double.*

When this is done, CHANGE.

Doublings to the left to be repeated in the ſame manner as before deſcribed.

CHANGE.
- Halt. Walk. March.
- Trot. Walk. Halt.
- Left about turn.
- Trot. March.
- Right about turn. } Without
- Left about turn. } halting.
- Halt. File to the rear.

Rear rank advance.

(Repeat the firſt repriſals.)

N. B. Whilſt the rear ranks were unemployed at the ride, the ſword exerciſe or any other might be practiſed which would not fatigue the horſes; the front might do the ſame during the interval of each repriſal.

SECOND REPRISAL TO THE RIGHT.

Trot. March. Form Section.

1, 2, and 3, double.

4, 5, and 6, double.

CHANGE { Halt. Walk. / March. Halt. / Trot. March. } Each ſection moves at the ſame moment.

Reduce the ſections.

(This brings them to ſingle horſe-men again.)

This is a left movement on going to the left. {

CHANGE.

Form ſections.

(Doublings as to the right.)

Halt. Walk. March.

After the rear rank has gone through this repriſal, begin the third in a gallop well ſupported, horſes well on their haunches.

THIRD REPRISAL.

To the right.---Gallop. March.

In order to do this well and with ſafety, let the leading file be oppoſite the left ſtake (No. 3.) the others in his rear, three good horſes lengths aſunder, as each man muſt on the word march, and at the ſame moment, make his horſe ſtrike into a gallop with the proper leg.

(Twice round.)

Form ſections.

1, 2, and 3, double.

4, 5, and 6, double.

CHANGE! (Twice round.)

Form ſections.

1, 2, and 3, } Double.
4, 5, and 6, }

Halt. Gallop. March.

Trot. Walk. Gallop.

Halt. Rein back. March. Halt.

March.

Halt.

N. B. The word march *only*, always ſignifies Walk!

To the right, } Paſſage. Halt.
To the left, }

The field officers and riding-maſter ſhould not attach themſelves to any particular troop, but keep moving from one to the other, aſſiſting in the inſtruction. In the riding houſe this drill would occaſionally be very uſeful to officers and quarter-maſters.

An excellent exerciſe for a regiment or ſquadron to practiſe, as it makes the men ride well, and at the ſame time accuſtoms them to preſerve a uniformity of pace, conſiſts in putting the whole regiment into a column of ſixes (which a wheel of ranks by three's to the right or left, will do) with a ſpace of half a horſe between each diviſion. Then ordering it to move off at the word

march,

march, in any pace, the whole ſhould ſtart at the ſame time, and halt all together. This is very difficult: a regiment however, perfect in this exerciſe, would find all others very eaſy.

OF STIRRUPS.

In the chapter on the inſtruction of the man I have ſaid nothing of ſtirrups, which ought not to be conſidered as giving any ſtrength or force to a horſeman's ſeat, tho' by a too frequent practice of riding with them, men very often make them a material part of it, which gives a ſtiffneſs to the whole body, and renders it impoſſible to ply to the motions of the horſe, and from this circumſtance the rider becomes more liable to be thrown off. The intention of the ſtirrups is to relieve the thighs and hips from the weight of the legs, and to raiſe and ſupport the foot.

The uſual mode of aſcertaining the proper length of the ſtirrup conſiſts in bringing the tread of the ſtirrup to the ancle bone; this however ſhortens the leather too much. The method I prefer, if the man cannot be relied on to adjuſt the ſtirrup himſelf, is after he is well ſeated on his ſaddle, to raiſe the foot at the ball with your hand, till the man bears on it without raiſing the heel; then with your whip meaſure up to the bar on the ſaddle-tree, from whence the ſtirrup hangs, and ſhorten the leather till the tread is the ſame length from the bar as what you marked on your whip.

I have not ſpoken of accuſtoming horſes to fire or the ſword, becauſe time and patience, with gentle uſage, are the only means to make the animal familiar with them. It is however ſafeſt, and conſequently adviſeable on all occaſions, when a horſe is to be initiated in any new exerciſe, which may aſtoniſh his ſight or hearing, to ſecure him

him with a caveſon and lunge, and attempt it, if poſſible, in the beginning without a rider. With theſe implements there is power ſufficient to hold him, and length of rein to give him room to ſpring without his entirely eſcaping, which would not be the caſe with the bridle reins. It is not uncommon to ſee a frightened horſe, either by the force of his jerk, or by fighting with his fore legs, get away from a man; and when once he has found out that it is in his power ſo to do, he will be very apt to repeat it.

OF THE BRIDLE.

Riding-maſters are very fond of making the men ride on both bit and bridoon, and this they aſſert tends to preſerve the horſe's mouth, than which, in my opinion, nothing can be more erroneous; I have met with others who give better reaſons for this practice,

practice, viz. that the men might raiſe their horſes by the bridoon. However trifling this may appear, there is nothing which requires ſo much judgment as the manner of uſing the bridoon to raiſe the head, and the bit to place it; for it is only for this purpoſe both can be made to act at the ſame time, and then it muſt be done very ſteadily and carefully, and requires a much greater ſkill in the art than a dragoon either has, or can ſtand in need of. For the firſt reaſon, viz. that of preſerving the horſe's mouth, to any one who conſiders and underſtands the effect of the bit (which all riding-maſters ought to do) it is clear that the bars of the mouth, having, as is the caſe in a common coach bit, a uniform pull on them, muſt ſoon loſe their ſenſibility and become callous. A well broke horſe is accuſtomed to carry his head high, and by feeling the bit lightly on his bars, preſerves in all paces this attitude. The fear of the bit

acting

acting on them, prevents his hanging his head on it; but if the bridoon is ſtrained, the horſe bears upon it to a certain point, and conſequently requires a ſtronger power of the bit to make him feel; and much greater indeed than would be neceſſary did nothing preſs the bars: In time therefore he loſes that dread of the bit, and throws himſelf on it, as he did on the bridoon; this renders him hard-mouthed. A heavy and inſenſible hand which never yields to the horſe, alſo produces the ſame effect: A heavy hand is a fault, not eaſily corrected; however, the few and confined movements of the hand, I think neceſſary to work the bridle, and have conſequently recommended in the foregoing part of this book, remedy this defect in a great degree, the men not having it in their power to annoy or ſpoil their horſes mouths.

Another bad effect of making men ride with the bridoon is, they acquire ſuch a habit

bit of making uſe of both hands, that when they have their ſwords drawn they cannot ride at all, for want of the bridoon. Their horſes are uneaſy, owing to the unſteadineſs of the bridle hand which throws their noſes up in the air. Bridoons are a very neceſſary appendage to the bit, not to aſſiſt its powers, but to relieve the mouth occaſionally. Thus on marches over level and good ground, and in going to and from exerciſe, they ſhould always be uſed, but then alone and as a ſnaffle bit, letting the reins of the bit hang on the horſe's neck. The hands when uſing this bit muſt be low, or high, according as the horſe carries his head, but the men ſhould not, as is the caſe almoſt always at watering parades, pull up their horſes noſes, but endeavour to place the head in the ſame poſition the bit would bring it to.

OF THE BIT.

Bits in general are extremely ill conſtructed, owing to an erroneous opinion that the longer the branch is, the more likely it is to ſtop a horſe. This will appear clearly to be a miſtaken notion, when the attitude in which a horſe is ſtopped by a bridle is conſidered. It muſt be the ſame, though in a leſs degree, as he is in when reining back, which is indiſputably carrying his weight on his haunches. The effect of a long branch is to a certain point the ſame as a properly conſtructed bit, that is, it pinches the under jaw on the bars; but from its length and power, it pulls the whole of the head down, and the noſe into the cheſt, which of courſe prevents the horſe from throwing himſelf on his haunches, as it brings the weight on his ſhoulders; and no horſe on his ſhoulders can be ſtop-

ped firm and ſhort. This, a bit well made, obliges him to do; as by ſqueezing the bar between the mouth piece and the curb chain, the horſe is obliged to yield his under jaw, which he cannot well do without raiſing his head a little, and if at the ſame time the horſeman aſſiſt this motion of the horſe by raiſing his hand, and throwing his body gradually back, the horſe is abſolutely obliged to halt on his hind legs, and thus in my opinion, a bit with a branch juſt clearing the chin is generally ſufficient, but an inch longer is quite enough in any caſe. The mouth piece ſhould not be ſmall, for if it is, it cuts and lacerates the bars, and renders the mouth uncertain. The chain ſhould for the ſame reaſon be made very thick. A bit ſhould be as pleaſant as poſſible to the horſe; if it hurts and annoys him, it takes off his attention to the ſlight movements of the hand, and makes him fretful and unpleaſant. No horſe can

run

Fig. 2. A. Holster fixed & made a part of the Saddle.
B. Necessary Bag made a part of the Saddle.
C. Opening of the Necessary Bags.

Fig. 1st.

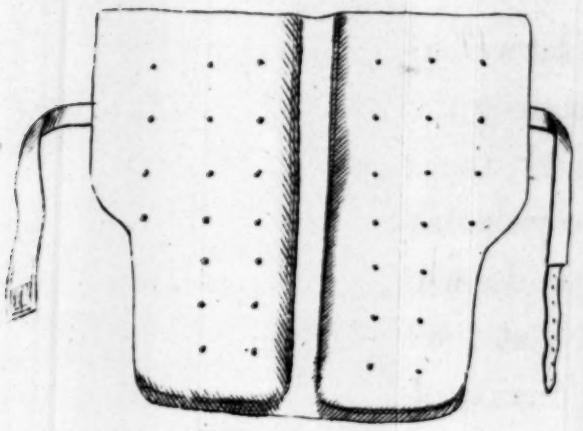


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Fig. 2nd.

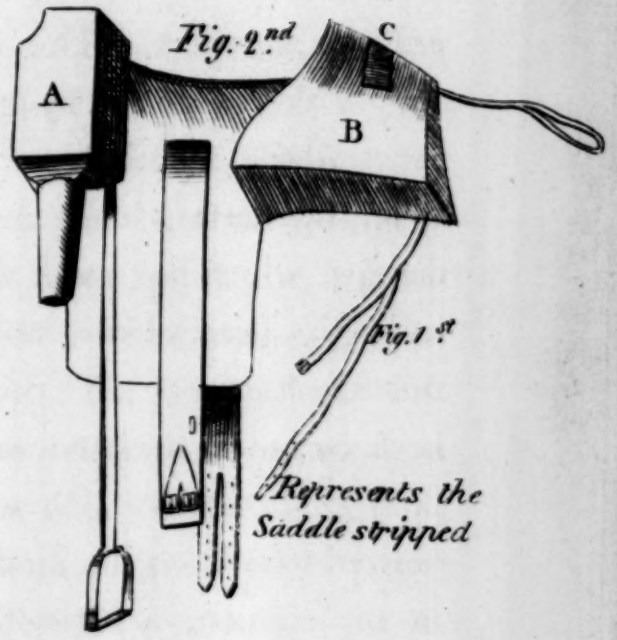
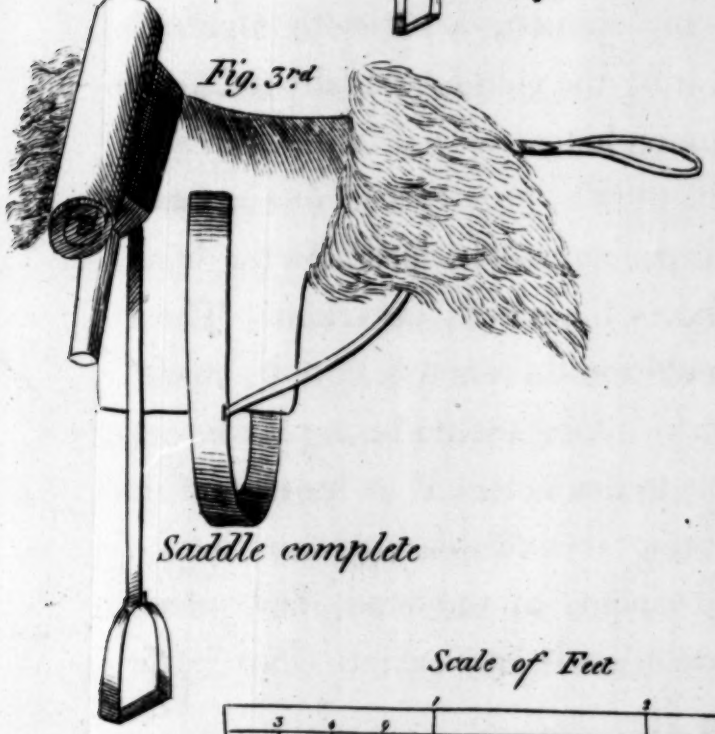


Fig. 1st

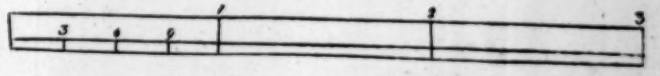
Represents the Saddle stripped

Fig. 3rd



Saddle complete

Scale of Feet



run away if his head is kept up, and the bit acts on the bars; but if the bit cuts and torments him, he will throw his noſe up, and in that poſition, the bit, by falling againſt the corner of the mouth, cannot act on his bars, and then he becomes unmanageable. The mouth piece ſhould not be longer than the width of the horſe's mouth, juſt ſuffering the branches to hang down cloſe by the ſide of the lips. The hollow of the mouth piece ſhould not be ſo wide as to allow the corner to preſs upon the bars, which would very much torment and hurt the horſe.

PLAN FOR A MILITARY SADDLE.

A ſoldier's ſaddle ſhould be ſo conſtructed that it may be put on the horſe without diſplacing the luggage, which is not trifling, at every unſaddling.

Holſters and piſtols.

Carbine and bucket.

Cloak: and

Neceſſary bag,

In which ſhould be carried his clothes, his ſtable utenſils, oil, and all other things requiſite for cleaning his horſe, arms, and appointments.---Such articles, which in time of peace might be called neceſſaries, but on ſervice would be diſpenſed with, might be carried in a valiſe or cloth, upon the neceſſary bag; which, if it could be made a part of the ſaddle, would be preferable, as ſtraps and cords are liable to be broken; and not ſecuring the luggage firm, cauſes warbles and ſore backs. This, I think, might be done without much increaſe of weight, and being covered with leather or painted cloth, be rather ornamental, and at the ſame time keep the neceſſaries dry. I have attempted by a drawing to explain how ſuch a ſaddle might be made.

FIGURE 1. This is a pannel, which is made to tie into the ſaddle as a ſaddle cloth does.

does. It has a ſurcingle on it, which ſecures it tight to the back, and prevents it hurting the back. It is alſo eaſier dried than if it was nailed to the ſaddle, which is a very important conſideration.

FIGURE 2. The holſters form two burs, as to a French pique ſaddle; it riſes very much at the pummel, to help the rider's ſeat, and is then perfectly ſtraight; but at about fourteen inches from the bottom of the ſlope of the pummel, a ſtrong piece of leather four inches high, is nailed on, reſembling the hind cantle of a pique ſaddle. At about ſix inches from this nail is another piece of leather, which will be at the extremity of the ſaddle; this back bit ſhould be only two inches high. The ſaddle tree which carries this, will continue out under it, about as wide as a pad or mail pillion, and under this the neceſſary bag ſhould hang, the ſides of which are formed by the two pieces of ſtrong leather before-mentioned.

tioned. A quilted pannel, ſuch as ſmugglers uſe to keep the load off the horſe's flank, and a ſtout piece of leather ſewed over this and joined to the two ſides, compoſe the bottom of the bag; the upper part and ends are formed of one piece of ſupple leather, ſewed to the upper edges of the ſide, and it opens immediately in the center by a ſlit on the top. The ſtirrups hang from the bottom of the ſwell of the holſter pipe, which as a ſurcingle is ſewed to the bottom of the ſkirts, is more convenient than hanging from the tree; it alſo leaves the legs more at liberty. The holſters are made ſtiff and ſtrong, and ſtaples fixed to them for the cloak to be buckled to. Over the pummel on the inner edge, a ring is put for the center cloak-ſtrap, which keeps it off the piſtols; a flounce hangs over the holſters, under the cloak. The houſing is already deſcribed: all the other appointments of bucket, breaſt-plate, &c. may be eaſily added. A ſaddle of this

kind,

kind, which is not much longer than a common one, nor much, if at all, heavier, would be put on the horſe in at leaſt one-ſixth of the time it now takes up.

I make no doubt but ſome objections may be made to this ſaddle, which is of my own invention, though the idea is borrowed from the old pique, which I have frequently heard experienced people call a good ſort of military ſaddle, as being moſt eaſy, and giving the man great ſupport in his ſeat; and the objection that it heats the men, is anſwered, by obſerving how much the cloak, neceſſaries, and perhaps three day's forage, muſt on any ſort of ſaddle do it. It is an undenied fact, that ſoldiers, when fatigued, ſleep on their horſes, and the load of forage they carry, from its forming a ſupport for their back, is an additional inducement to them to give way to their deſire to ſleep. On the ordinary ſaddle they ſit looſe and roll about, which more frequently produces

warbles

warbles and ſore backs than any other cauſe; but in the pique ſaddle the thighs are ſteadied by the burs and cantle, which circumſtance gives a great ſecurity and ſtrength to the ſeat, and keeps the man firm in his ſaddle even whilſt aſleep. I ſhould not have obtruded this ſaddle of mine on the public, but for the perpetual complaints which are made reſpecting that imporant appointment. However, from the recent circumſtance of a German officer* of rank being ſent to England, to procure patterns of our ſaddles, which are to be adopted by the army he ſerves in, I am inclined to think them preferable to any now uſed.

* This was written in February, 1797.

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